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BOOK REVIEWS.

Geschichte der deutschen Landwirthschaft. By DR. THEODOR FREIHERR VON DER GOLTZ. Zweiter Band. Berlin and Stuttgart: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1903. 8vo, pp. 414.

In view of the good qualities of this latest issue of Director von der Goltz's work, we are not prepared simply to say, as does the German reviewer often when he finds his fund of flattering epithets exhausted, that in this volume the author has *glänzend* fulfilled the promises held out to the public in the preceding one. Considering our objection to certain matters in the first volume, this would be anything but unqualified praise. On the contrary, we desire to pay the author our strongest compliment for this part of his work by stating that in his second volume he has produced a book decidedly modern in all respects, meeting both in subject and treatment all just expectations.

This concluding volume of Director von der Goltz's work consists of two general divisions, the first discussing the reformation of agriculture during the first half of the nineteenth century; the second, its further development under the more and more dominant influence of the natural sciences (1850-80). An appendix concludes the book, in which are briefly discussed the causes and the nature of the crisis which for the last twenty years has so seriously threatened German agrarian life. Under these broad headings are again grouped others connected with the great improvement in the cultivation of land and the final emancipation and elevation of the peasant class.

The book begins with a stately review of the work of the enlightened, progressive, and patriotic men who in their instruction and writings paved the way for more or less radical changes. The consideration with which these leaders, a dozen or more, are treated in the opening hundred pages of the book is one of its most attractive features. The greatest of them all, the Nestor and founder of a new science, at whose feet most of the following apostles and prophets of the new movement had sat, was Albrecht Thaer (1752-1828). His contemporary, who did for southern Germany what Thaer did

for the north, was Johann Nepomuk Schwerz (1759-1844). Others followed in their wake as assistants, successors, or leaders in different fields. All were almost without exception active as teachers, heads of schools, and more or less prolific authors. Thaer himself became the founder of a periodical, which again became the parent of others. All were men of broad education, wide experience, and ideal views in regard to the high calling of their favorite study, and the elevated character of the proclaimers had much to do with the speedy acceptance of their doctrine. It is of value, however, for the observation of the world-wide dissemination of ideas, to notice that Thaer and others were vitally influenced in their propaganda for a thorough and rational reform by the writings of the English economists, Arthur Young and Adam Smith. The first translation of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared in German in less than a year after the original. German economists and statesmen, like Hardenberg, von Stein, and others, in their attempts at reform in kindred fields, were just as much influenced by the ideas of the great Scotchman. The edict of October 9, 1807, which opens the era of reform in law in Prussia, breathes wholly the spirit of Smith's doctrine (p. 91). Most interesting and decidedly new was the effort of the economist Johann Heinrich von Thünen (1783-1858), in his *The Isolated State*, to regulate by mathematical formula from wholly theoretical speculations the expenses and the profit from any kind of cultivation and establish the true medium of wages (p. 100). If the margin of necessity in a workman's wages be signified by the letter *A*, and the joint income from work and capital by the letter *B*, the just proportion of wages as compared with profit would be found by dividing *AB* by its square root. So delighted was he with this *eureka*, which it took him twenty years to find, that he had the formula engraved on his tombstone. While alive, he used it as a means of learning the true amount due to each laborer, and every year at Christmas distributed this among them in the form of a savings-bank account. Von Thünen's formula soon proved itself fictitious, as have many others, but the fame of its discoverer led proprietors to give their laborers a yearly percentage of the profits, and in one case at least this act of generosity brought its proper result in increased devotion on the part of the workmen to the welfare of the estate (p. 103).

The number of academies founded by private or princely effort in the Prussian monarchy alone from 1789 to 1858 the author sets

at nineteen. As early as 1826 began the establishment of departments of agriculture in connection with the universities—Jena, Greifswald, Bonn, and Göttingen being the first ones to possess such.

Literary and educational endeavor, however, might not have effected so thorough a revolution had not earlier political events necessitated the creation of a new order of things. In 1807 Prussia was reduced to her lowest stage of political insignificance. To infuse new vigor into the body politic, and especially to raise hope in that portion of the population which was bearing the heaviest burden of taxation, the already mentioned edict of October 9, 1807, was issued. With one stroke this broke the chains of centuries and abolished serfdom within the whole kingdom. In this edict Prussia in the hour of her humiliation only followed the lead of her arch-enemy France, who, however great her oppression in other ways, by the Revolution and by the Code Napoléon had at least carried political freedom into all the countries which she had so far conquered. In the next year other edicts followed; and the work of emancipation, although stopping for a period with the year 1821, was really not completed in all its phases until after 1848. In 1850 the last edict which crowns the whole system saw the light—the edict for the creation of loan banks to assist peasants in buying their present holdings on long-time payments bearing a low rate of interest; very much, by the way, the same thing which our government does for the Filipino tenantry and which England has now decided to do for the Irish. To this legislation, which at least for its first part, until 1821, is called the Stein-Hardenberg legislation because of the two statesmen whose ideas prevail in it, the author devotes considerable space; and there is, of course, hardly any more instructive period in the whole history of Prussia (pp. 132-65).

The author then goes on to discuss the effects of emancipation upon the propertied classes, and finds that after a period of considerable difficulty and economic distress the incentive to self-reliance worked admirably, and all parties must be said to have gained by the great and sweeping change. Strange to say, a class of day-laborers, recruited from many quarters, arose almost immediately and furnished the large landowners with the help they needed. Thus all forebodings of the dire distress to be caused by lack of workmen came to naught. That the government in this trying period of readjustment stood faithfully by the class hardest smitten, the nobility, was to be expected. The low prices of grain threw a

large number of cultivators into debt, but a paternal government came to their rescue with large loans on long terms (*Retablissements-gelder*, p. 174). As a result, the large proprietors threw themselves into other and new ventures, such as wool-growing and the more scientific cultivation of their fields. A new element had entered their ranks from the *bourgeoisie* and even from the peasantry. These, in accordance with the terms of the edict at the prevailing low prices, became possessors of large estates, which they in rivalry with their neighbors raised to a high degree of productivity. To the peasant also the government extended aid, particularly during the agrarian crisis of 1821-30. But the results of the emancipation itself did more for the small proprietor than any assistance from outside. The personal freedom, the gradually increasing economic independence, the establishment of schools which gave to everyone's keeping, not only the precious art of reading and writing, but also the knowledge of running his farm and improving his stock, the obligation to bear arms, and finally the associations and societies springing up on every side to which the peasant had access—all within a short time raised his standard of life and work immeasurably. He was still simple in habits, economical and hard-working, but his sense of independence and self-respect stamped him as a different individual. It must not be understood, however, that the government in Prussia, as in Russia, endowed the serfs with land upon their emancipation. On the contrary, the peasant could only hold land to which he had some sort of recognized claim. In 1816, the author tells us, there were 354,610 peasant holdings, but in 1859—fifty years later—the regulations of the edicts which permitted landowners under certain circumstances to absorb into their estates holdings to which the peasants had either no justified claim or refused to present any, had already reduced the sum total of small holdings to 344,737—nearly ten thousand less. How to manage the large estates, now that the accustomed help had vanished, seemed a serious problem; but, as already stated, there were many reasons why the necessary help was not wanting. The laboring class which thus arose, the fourth estate, with or without permanent employment, was composed, as it happened, of people who either had no land or, if they had, chose to let others, particularly the wives and children, manage it for them while they themselves went in search of other work. There were also laborers under contract, who were settled on the estate, receiving a house, some land, a garden plot, forage for a

cow or some sheep, free fuel, and other emoluments, in return for which they, and at times also their wives, worked every day with one or more hired hands under them. As compensation they received small daily wages, generally not more than 25 or 30 pfennig, which helped to keep them in clothing. Their number was sometimes augmented by stray workmen, lodgers in the village, who took what work they could find, and who at times earned a great deal, but at others, especially in winter, suffered untold privations. Last, but not least, the proprietor had his servants, to whom he paid monthly or yearly wages, and who had each his duty assigned; but these the author looks upon as transient, forming no class, being often the sons and daughters of farmers, and returning to their former condition after their term of service was over. The inducement to become a day-laborer under contract lay largely in the wages, which offered an opportunity, however small, for saving, especially if it included also the compensation for the hired hand, whom the workman paid out of his own wages, and either obtained for next to nothing or fleeced most unmercifully, for it is calculated that he often made 50 per cent. on the transaction.

Director von der Goltz naturally goes into great detail in accounting for the improvements in every branch of agriculture, especially for the change from the pure three-field system to a more elaborate rotation of crops, by means of which the fallow was put under partial cultivation, and what was termed a six-, nine-, or twelve-field system adopted which helped to fertilize the soil rather than otherwise. But this and the invention of deeper-cutting plows, the raising of cattle from improved stock, the science of proper feeding, and much more, we feel obliged to omit. It may suffice to call attention to the lists showing the gradual increase in number of cattle and of sheep, of which latter in 1849 there were 16 millions, *i. e.*, more than twice as many as in 1816. Considering that Prussia is not very much larger than Virginia and vastly less fertile, the facts speak well for the beneficial results of the change. Other improvements and inventions went hand in hand with this. Germany can claim the honor of being the first to discover how to make sugar from beets (1798). In 1851-52 there were 234 factories in this branch of industry alone. The wages for day-laborers too increased till in 1860 they had doubled its former amount (p. 261).

The epoch-making discoveries of Liebig, and the controversy arising from the polemic he kept up with the representatives of older

methods, is the subject of one of the minor divisions. The author does justice to Liebig's greatness, but also to the bitter animosities which his arrogance and often unwarranted and scathing criticisms caused. One who has seen the snow-white marble of his statue in Munich streaked with large blotches of acid sullyng and marring forever the face and the imperious figure of the great scientist, realizes something of the hardness of feeling between the opposing camps. The bitter attacks of Liebig on the agricultural schools led to the discontinuation of many of these and their union with the universities. In their place rose winter schools or institutes for more elementary training, and itinerant instructors traversed the land and gave assistance and advice wherever demanded. Experiment stations were founded everywhere, and in 1900 not less than seventy were in existence. The period 1850-80 the author calls the happiest which German agriculture had ever had. On the other hand, the high prices led to overproduction and extravagance, and brought with them the evils under which German agriculture at present suffers. The causes of the present depression the author sees partly in conjunctures which have since risen, partly in conditions which began then. Indebtedness caused by the necessity of modern improvements, as well as by recklessness in speculation, became more general among all classes. The inclination of the agriculturalists to borrow money on the prospect of good harvests and profitable sales increased the number of banks, which granted loans on comparatively small security and at more or less exorbitant rates of interest. Naturally the larger estates, with their greater demand for capital and larger interests at stake, were the ones most deeply involved. In 1896, as the author shows us, 70 per cent. of the total number of large estates were in debt for from 30 to 60 per cent. or more of their value. Particularly was this true of the eastern and northeastern portions of Germany, where the estates are largest and the population thinnest. Another difficulty which the large land-owners had to meet, often unsuccessfully, was the increased emigration of the laboring class to the industrial centers, from the east toward the west, and even to foreign countries. Conditions now were utterly different from what they had been some sixty years before, when after the war of liberation the population, particularly among the working classes, increased so rapidly that the government had been glad to assist those who wished to go abroad. These grave matters, the author thinks, might have been properly attended to,

and the increasing depopulation of the rural districts have been prevented, if all parties could have decided upon a greater reduction in living expenses, and especially if the establishment of small proprietors could have been effected whose interests were centered in the land. Thus labor would have been kept at home instead of crowding foreign markets. But the general indifference of the land-owners toward the question and their materialistic view of the whole matter are, in the author's opinion—and we dare say he is right—to a large extent responsible for the present aggravated state; and it is hard to say how the difficulty is finally to be solved. The rural laborer, although his wages had risen 50 per cent., felt only too keenly the uncertainty of his condition. His earnings were but small, sickness or change of masters might throw him out of employment altogether. His share in the output of the estate was lessened by the introduction of machinery; his chance of steady employment was further lessened by the increasing habit of relying in harvest time on the free hands who flocked to certain districts, or on the foreign laborers, especially Poles, who were at such times imported in large numbers. Last, but not least, such rural laborers had to face long and severe winters, whatever the rest of the year might bring. And winter was a period, after the threshing in barns was no longer customary, for which they were poorly prepared. The towns, on the other hand, though along with many and keener hardships, offered to the workman opportunity for improvement and the chance, by a lucky turn of affairs, of rising to the level of his betters—a chance he was but too eager to take. The author cannot help blaming the Social Democracy for openly and secretly fanning the flame of discontent, but he does it in terms very moderate for a man of his strict conceptions, and on the whole his objections are perfectly just and reasonable. On the other hand, he hails with gratification the growth of societies for the manufacture, sale, and purchase of agricultural implements, and insurance against damage and danger which serves to keep a man out of bankruptcy and ruin (pp. 371-82).

German agriculture has now entered the world-market or, perhaps, to speak more correctly, has been invaded by it. It has now competitors in all fields of production, with whom it had not to count before. Russia, North America, and Argentine all export their wheat, their cattle, wool, meat, and oil, a large portion of which is thrown on the German market; and a most destructive fall in prices has been the result. The author gives us table after table showing

the amazing change in nearly every field of production. The prices of wheat and rye in 1891-1900 were respectively 26.9 per cent. and 11.8 per cent. lower than they had been exactly twenty years before. In order to appreciate the importance of the reduction, it is necessary to call to mind that almost one-third of the total acreage of Germany is devoted to the cultivation of either the one or the other of these grains. Even heavier was the fall in the price of beet sugar. While in 1880 it was 64.1 mark per 200 pounds, in 1900 it was but 22.2. In every direction heavier demands have been made on the economic endurance of the people. While wages have risen, prices have declined. The average farmer suffers least, for he has few expenses and his produce suffices for his immediate needs. He has little surplus on his hands; yet in case he has something to sell, he is less able than is the farmer on a large scale to stand the expense of transportation or the smallness of the margin gained. In spite of all odds, the situation of the day-laborer is doubtless the best. He is everywhere in demand, he can command almost any wages he wants, and has the fate of his employer in his hand, as it were. Whatever may have been his previous difficulties, at present he is not far from being the master of the situation.

The author expresses the modest wish that his book may be of use to German agriculture. On the strength of what we have presented in these necessarily condensed reviews, we presume to think that particularly this second volume, even if not so detailed, bears comparison with St. Genlis's and also portions of Levasseur's comprehensive and thoroughgoing treatment of the same and a kindred subject.

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Les cartells de l'agriculture en Allemagne. By A. SOUCHON.
Paris: Armand Colin, 1903. 12mo, pp. 351.

In this book Professor Souchon examines the German combinations which deal with agricultural products with two points in view: first, to ascertain what they have done and can do in controlling markets and obtaining better terms for the producers; second, to round out and complete the series of studies on industrial combinations.

The origin of the movement is found in the conditions of world-competition which, since 1870, have placed all agriculturists of